

them it might naturally be inferred that the nearest land was several miles distant, namely, that of the hypogene rocks which bound the basin of the Connecticut. Now, the land that caused the sea-beach, Mr. Lyell says, must have been formed of the same sandstone which was then in the act of accumulating, in the same manner as where deltas are advancing upon the sea.

In a postscript, Mr. Lyell states, that subsequently to writing the paper he had read the luminous report of Mr. Vanuxem on the *Ornithichnites* described by Prof. Hitchcock, and though it agrees in substance with his own account in some particulars, yet that he has left his notice as it stood.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

### ON THE PEARL OYSTER OF CEYLON.

“It may interest some of your conchological acquaintances to know that *Avicula radiata* of Leach is the far-famed Pearl Oyster of Ceylon. I have got plenty of all ages destined for the Belfast Museum. I send you a sketch\* of the fry which roves about near the surface of the sea; it in scarcely any respect resembles the full-grown shell.”  
*Vide Nat. Misc.*, vol. i. pl. 43.—*Extract from R. Templeton's, Esq., R.A., letter from Colombo in Ceylon, May 19, 1842.*

### FOSSIL REMAINS IN ESSEX.

#### *To the Editors of the Annals of Natural History.*

GENTLEMEN,—Fossil remains of Mammalia have been met with so often in the county of Essex that their occurrence now almost ceases to excite surprise, but a large portion of a fossil tusk of the elephant has very recently been found at Grays Thurrock, of dimensions so large as to favour the impression, that the animal to which it formerly belonged must have arrived at the maximum size of those giants of the animal kingdom.

This fine fossil in its present state is two feet eleven inches in length; it is broken off at both ends, and appears to have formed the middle third part of the tusk in length. At its larger extremity it is  $19\frac{1}{2}$  inches in circumference, and when it is considered that no part of the cavity forming the alveolus can be seen, that portion being broken off and with it more of the larger end of the tusk probably;—bearing this in mind, we may fairly infer that the tusk was quite as long as our conclusions warrant in drawing from the facts before us.

At its smaller end it is broken off at that part which gives us fifteen inches circumference, and as to its length, by following the two outer curvatures of this fragment to a point, these lines meet at a distance of about three feet from the smaller circumference; and if we allow little more than two feet from its larger end for the alveolus and other missing portions, we then have a length of between eight and nine feet when this tusk was whole.

\* The figure will be given in one of the Plates of our present volume.—ED.

This fossil was discovered about a month ago in a bed of detritus, thirty feet from the surface, in a brick-field, at the locality before mentioned in this county; a locality rich in mammalian and other fossil remains, vide pages 262 and 263, vol. ix. of this work; and it is now in the collection of Mrs. Mills of Lexden Park, near Colchester, to whose kindness I am indebted for the measurements of this relic of days long gone by; another fact illustrating the alteration in the fauna of our planet.

I am, Gentlemen, yours very truly,  
 Stanway, Feb. 4, 1843. JOHN BROWN.

NOTICE OF THE DISCOVERY OF AN ELECTRICAL FISH ON THE AMERICAN COAST. BY D. HUMPHREYS STORER, M.D.

A species of Ray possessing electrical powers has been known to the fishermen of Cape Cod and New York for many years, and called by them the *cramp-fish* or *numb-fish*. Mitchell, in his paper on the "Fishes of New York," contained in the first volume of the Transactions of the Literary and Philosophical Society of New York, refers to this species; he had never seen it, but, from the facts he was enabled to collect respecting it, he supposed it to be identical with the European species "*Raia torpedo*," and as such introduces it into his memoir. In my Report on the Fishes of Massachusetts, I merely observed that a *Torpedo* was found on the coast of Cape Cod, but being unable to procure a specimen, I could not identify it. I have had the good fortune to procure a fine specimen within the last month, which was captured at Wellfleet; it was 4 feet 2 inches in length, and proves to be a *Torpedo nobiliana*, Bonaparte. It agrees perfectly with Mr. Thompson's description, in the fifth volume of the 'Annals of Natural History,' of a specimen taken on the Irish coast in 1838.

As some time may elapse before I can publish a contemplated paper on our fishes, I would avail myself of your valuable Journal to make the above-mentioned fact known to ichthyologists.—*Silliman's Journal*, Jan. 1843.

ON A PECULIAR SENSATION CAUSED BY SOME MOLLUSCA. BY FRANCIS M. JENNINGS.

On the 2nd of May, 1842, I brought before the Cork Cuvierian Society a short notice of a curious fact I had observed in some fresh-water mollusca, viz. a power of causing a peculiar sensation when placed on the tongue; this may be experienced by putting the *Limneus periger*, a small univalve shell which abounds in most ponds and lakes in this country, into the mouth, and allowing the foot of the animal to remain for a few minutes on the tongue, when the sensation will be felt, varying in intensity according to the size of the animal and the length of time it is allowed to remain.

The sensation, though not decidedly painful, is yet rather disagreeable whilst it continues, frequently lasting from one to two hours, being exerted with greater energy during warm than cold weather. I tried a few experiments to ascertain whether the power

arose from an acid secretion, capable of being emitted at pleasure by the animal, but so far without success.

I hope these few observations will be the means of directing the attention of naturalists to this subject, which has hitherto, I believe, escaped their notice.

Brown Street, Cork, March 4, 1843.

FRANCIS M. JENNINGS.

Mr. Jennings having sent the foregoing to me to forward for publication, I beg to add, that I repeated his experiment with a similar result to that he describes. I understand that Mr. Armstrong of this city, having, in collecting *Ancyli*, put some of them into his mouth, experienced the same painful action from the contact of these animals with his tongue. As I am not aware that the subject is rightly understood, I think it worth bringing under notice.

Dublin, March 13, 1843.

ROBERT BALL.

METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS FOR FEB. 1843.

*Chiswick*.—Feb. 1. Very fine : cloudy. 2. Heavy rain : overcast. 3. Stormy showers : boisterous. 4. Stormy : very boisterous. 5. Clear and frosty. 6. Cloudy. 7. Hazy : sleet. 8. Dense fog : hazy and cold. 9. Cold easterly haze. 10. Densely clouded. 11. Uniformly overcast. 12. Slight drizzle. 13. Frosty : hazy : sharp frost at night. 14. Frosty : cloudy : severe frost. 15. Sharp frost : snow flakes : frosty. 16. Dry air and frosty : overcast. 17. Clear and frosty : very fine : stormy at night. 18. Stormy, with drifting snow. 19. Overcast : heavy rain. 20. Rain : foggy. 21. Foggy : fine : foggy. 22. Slight rain : cloudy. 23. Very fine. 24. Foggy : cold easterly haze. 25. Slight drizzle : stormy. 26. Sleet : drizzly. 27. Stormy and wet : barometer very low. 28. Cloudy.—Mean temperature of the month  $3^{\circ} \cdot 8$  below the average.

*Boston*.—Feb. 1. Fine. 2. Rain : stormy, with rain P.M. 3. Fine : stormy, with snow P.M. : stormy night. 4. Stormy : hail and snow P.M. 5. Fine. 6. Fine : rain and snow P.M. 7. Cloudy : rain P.M. 8. Cloudy. 9. Fine. 10. Fine : rain P.M. 11. Rain : rain early A.M. : rain P.M. 12. Cloudy. 13. Fine. 14—16. Cloudy. 17. Fine. 18. Cloudy : snow A.M. 19. Cloudy : rain P.M. 20. Cloudy : rain early A.M. : rain P.M. 21. Cloudy. 22. Rain : rain early A.M. : rain A.M. 23. Fine. 24. Cloudy. 25. Cloudy : rain and snow P.M. 26—28. Cloudy.

*Sandwich Manse, Orkney*.—Feb. 1. Showers. 2. At  $1\frac{1}{2}$  P.M. wind N.W. : stormy, with drift. 3. Snow-drift : at 12 at night a storm began. 4. Cloudy : thaw : frost. 5. Cloudy : frost. 6. Bright : frost : thaw : aurora. 7. Clear : frost : thaw. 8. Bright : thaw : damp. 9, 10. Cloudy : frost. 11. Drizzly showers : clear hoar-frost. 12. Clear frost : clear hoar-frost. 13. Showers : snow-showers. 14. Snow-drift. 15. Clear : snowing. 16, 17. Snow-showers : clear. 18. Clear : cloudy. 19. Bright : cloudy. 20. Bright : thaw. 21. Cloudy : thaw. 22. Snow-showers : cloudy : frost. 23. Clear and frosty. 24. Bright : cloudy : thaw. 25. Cloudy : frost. 26. Cloudy : snow-showers. 27. Snow-showers : clear and frosty. 28. Clear and frosty : snow-showers.

*Applegarth Manse, Dumfries-shire*.—Feb. 1. Heavy showers P.M. 2. Snow-showers. 3. Snow : frost P.M. 4. Frost and snow. 5. Fine, but frosty. 6. Frost A.M. : rain P.M. 7. Thaw : high wind P.M. 8. Mild and fair. 9. Fair, but chilly. 10. Sprinkling of snow : frost. 11, 12. Fair : no frost. 13. Frost : fine. 14. Frost. 15. Frost : shower of snow. 16—18. Frost. 19. Slight frost. 20. Snow and sleet. 21. Slight rain. 22. Fair. 23, 24. Showery. 25. Fine and fair. 26. Fair, but cloudy. 27. Fair. 28. Frost A.M. : slight snow.